

IDEA-0340

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8 June 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Reviewing Photo Coverage Requirements in a Static Situation

1. I feel that the current requirement for weekly U-2 coverage of Cuba, primarily for CINCLANT, has placed the Agency in a very undesirable position with regard to utilization of U-2 assets. In the past, concrete justification was advanced prior to each mission and was the basis on which approval was solicited from "higher authority." The CINCLANT requirement is essentially a surveillance type of mission, each of which has little reference to the information gathered on previous missions. In accepting this Cuba-type operation, the following compromises ensue:

- a. The premise that the U-2 mission is to obtain intelligence data of highest interest to the U.S. Government becomes suspect.
- b. The long period of building up confidence since 1 May 1960 may be lost if an aircraft should make an emergency landing, thus creating a reluctance to grant approval for higher priority missions. This type of mission may be considered an undue exposure when compared with higher priority requirements.
- c. Service maneuvering in committing the Edwards unit to a long-term project in several places gives justification for DOD U-2 participation in overflights.
- d. We will never be able to satisfy a "currency" requirement by repeating missions.

2. In an attempt to get the IDEALIST project off this treadmill, I have requested Mr. Reber to include in his next request for overflight authority a priority listing of COMOR areas of interest, including

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the USSR. Cuba should appear on the list in such a position as to once again bring the entire intelligence picture into focus and at the same time re-emphasize the great capability and importance of judicious utilization of U-2 aircraft.

3. We are preparing to fly this Cuba request Friday, 9 June, per 5412 Group approval granted 11 May for weekly coverage.

(Signed) Stanley W. Beerli

STANLEY W. BEERLI
Colonel, USAF
Acting Chief, DPD-DD/P

AC/DPD:SWB:jr

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